12

A SERMON

Preached at the

CONSECRATION

Of the HONOURABLE

Dr. *HENRY COMPTON*,

Lord Bishop of OXFORD,

IN

LAMBETH-CHAPPEL,

On *Sunday, December* 6. 1674.

By WILLIAM JANE B. D.

Student of Christ-Church, *and Chaplain to his Lordship.*

LONDON,

Printed by *W. Godbid*, and are to be sold by *R. Littlebury*, at the *Kings-Arms* in *Little-Britain*, 1675.

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To the Right Reverend Father in God

HENRY,

LORD BISHOP of *OXFORD.*

My Lord,

ALthough I am too conscious of the manifold defects of this poor Discourse, to lay any claim to your Lordships acceptance, as the encouragement of its Publication; yet I have had such great experience of your Lordships favour, as to conceive some hopes, that it may find the same shelter with its Author under your Lordships patronage, and protection. When I first received your Lordships command, which engaged me upon this duty, I esteemed it a greater Honour, than my own ambition could ever have aspired to. It was happiness enough for me to bear any part, how inconsiderable soever, in that dayes Solemnity, which in the judgement of all, who have a real kindness

for the Church, was ſo ſignal an argument of Gods Care and Providence over it. But ſince by my intire reſignation of this weak performance (as I was in duty bound) to your Lordſhips Judgement, it is no longer at my own diſpoſal, and that, which I thought too mean to attend your Lordſhips CONSECRATION, *has been thought fit to live with the remembrance of it: I have this further favour to requeſt for it, that I may be allowed to thruſt it forth into the world under your Lordſhips Name. I ſhall only add my unfeigned deſires to the God of Heaven, that (as he has been pleaſed, in this declining Age, to raiſe up to his People, ſuch an able inſtrument of his Glory, ſo) he would go on to give ſucceſs to your Lordſhips deſigns, anſwerable to the expectations of your Country, and the neceſſities of his Church. Which ſhall ever be the daily Prayer of*

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips

Moſt humbly devoted Chaplain,

WILLIAM JANE.

Acts 20. 28.

Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

WE read in the 17th *vers.* of this *chap.* that St. *Paul* sent from *Miletus* to *Ephesus*, and called τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας *the Elders or Presbyters of the Church.* In this *vers.* which contains a considerable part of his Visitation Sermon, he tells them ὑμᾶς, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους, *the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops.*

This seeming confusion of Names in this and other places of Scripture, indiscriminately applyed to the Pastors and Officers of the Church, was the presence of *Aerius*, though Pride and Ambition were the rea-

for to inferr a like communion in the dignity of Bishop and Presbyter, and a total parity in their Office. And though this is surely a very slender argument to any considering men, to violate the unity of Christians, and to cashier that form of Government which had been received universally in the Church, from the Apostles days unto their own, upon a pretence, that Antichrist begun betimes; yet neither is it so slight and despicable, but that it has exercised the greatest Wits in all Ages (even those, in which it cannot be pretended that Truth was twisted with design) in endeavouring a probable solution of it. For, to omit the interpretation of some, that, such as were Presbyters, when St. *Paul* sent for them, he here consecrates Bishops, by telling them, that the Holy Ghost had made them so, (as being a groundless and arbitrary conjecture,) if we consult those Opinions which carry the greatest vogue and reputation in the World, we shall scarce find one, in which two have consented, when we have excluded those from the number, who do not pretend to deliver their own sense, but professedly transcribe from others. The immediate question, wherein our Authors are divided, is, Whether Bishop, and Presbyter were two distinct Orders at the time of the writing the Books of the New Testament, or in a small space of time after, the one were superadded to the other? Those who defend the latter, are further subdivided as far as the subject will admit. For we are told on the one hand, that the names of Bishop and Presbyter were once promiscuously given to the inferiour Order

of the Clergy, which were afterwards used with distinction, when, for the future preventing of Schism, Episcopacy was introduced upon it, which seems to be the Judgment of Dr. *Hammond*: And with greater probability on the other, that they were indifferent appellations of the higher Order of Church Officers, to whom the name of Bishop became then appropriate, when upon the increase of their charge, by the multitude of their Proselites, inferiour Presbyters were universally admitted, in some measure to ease them of the burden. An opinion with infinite accuracy and variety of learning first cleared and defended by the Reverend Dr. *Hammond*. They who have pitcht upon the defence of the former part of the main Question, That both Orders were Coeval and distinguished from one another by their Author, at the Primitive institution of them, are yet more divided in their explications. For some tell us, which Dr. *Hammond* admits for probable, that the word *Presbyter* is the Scripture appellative of the Inferiour Order of the Clergy; whereas both were common to the Bishop, in as much as both Offices designed by them, were eminently vested in him. St. *Chrysostom*, on the contrary, thinks it no inconvenience at all, that the distinction of Offices should remain inviolate, notwithstanding the confusion of names: Whereas a third Opinion sufficiently distinguished from the other two, asserts, that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were common denominations of the second Order of Priest-hood, those whom we now stile Bishops, being at that time called

Apoſtles: A Comment firſt ſuggeſted by *Theodoret*, and ſince maintained by the Judicious *Hooker* in the days of our Forefathers, and with a little variation by the learned *Thorndike* in our own. I have not produced theſe Opinions to compare them with one another, or to examin the ſeveral claims which each of them pretends to truth, but only conſidering them joyntly, to make theſe few remarques upon them all.

And firſt our Aſſertors of the Presbyterian Hierarchy, may do well to conſider whoſe Cauſe it is, which is with ſo great eagerneſs maintained by them: Not the Cauſe of God, or of his Church, but of a noted Heretick, infamous upon the records of *Epiphanius*, St. *Auſtin*, *Philaſtrius*, and other Fathers of the Church, for the point in queſtion, and conſequently branded for the ſame by the Church it ſelf, whoſe Judgments thoſe Fathers expreſly teſtifie. He who was notorious in his own time, for the great diſturber of the world, is now ſet up by our pretended Diſciplinarians for the great Champion of Truth. Nor do they ſo much help themſelves, by ſaying, that *Arrianiſm* was *Aerius* his Hereſie, (and indeed *Epiphanius* calls him an *Arrian* altogether,) as give us occaſion further to obſerve the ſecret, and myſtical connexion between *Arrius* his Doctrin, and *Aerius* his Diſcipline. I do not aſſert, that St. *Ignatius* was Prophetical, in affording the Church throughout his Epiſtles, ſuch ſignal teſtimonies againſt both: Yet ſurely they ought to have been well weighed by thoſe learned men, who have rejected the works of

that renowned Father, before they chose, rather than part with a Creature of their own interest and fancy, to quit the advantages of those peegnant authorities against the *Socinians*, incomparably clearer than all the Fathers of the Church put together, for the first 300 years. It is not my purpose to lay the Heresie of *Arrius* to the charge of *Aerius* his followers, or to inquire into the causal influence of the one upon the other. But methinks this one reflection, how much *Socinianism*, which is but *Arrianism* improved, has thriven and prospered, under the influence of the Presbytery in our neighbour Nation, and (as 'tis greatly to be suspected) in our own, might prove a motive sufficient to our dissenting Brethren to consider, that Heresie and Schism go usually together, and to renounce that Schismatical Discipline, which we have seen by woful experience so notoriously to shelter an Heretical Doctrin.

2. We may observe, that however learned men have dissented as to the particular periods of the Commencement of either Order, yet in this they all agree, that a superiority of the one above the other, is of Apostolical institution: Which observation, if any man think to elude from the authorities of *Ignatius*, *Irenaus*, *Origen*, St. *Ambrose*, or St. *Austin*, I desire him only to read the learned *Spalatensis* his *Examen* of their Testimonies, to make him for ever ashamed of obtruding them any more. Nay so evident is this in the ancient Records of the Church, that the Reverend Bishop *Bilson*, out of *Eusebius*, *Hegesippus*, *Socrates*, St. *Jerome*, *Epiphanius*, and others, has

has given us as exact a Catalogue of the succession of Bishops from the Apostles, in the four Apostolical Sees, till the first Council of *Nice*, as ever the *Roman* Archives could at any time give of their Consuls, or our common Chroniclers of our Kings, since the Conquest. From which consideration, we have ground for an answer to a twofold pretence of the Advocates of Presbytery, the one in taking from us the Testimony of *Ignatius*, the other, in urging against us the Authority of St. *Jerome*.

As for the first of these, it is Monsieur *Daillé's* principal argument from the Phrase, that that blessed Martyr always makes a distinction in the names of Bishop and Presbyter, which the Apostolical writings do so confessedly confound with one another: But if this be his highest evidence, as 'tis manifest from his writings, that it is, it is but a small advantage to his Cause, and cannot possibly support it self against any one of those various Hypotheses, which we just now mentioned for a solution of the doubt. For first, those who think that the Christian Priest-hood was originally preserved in one Order, and at length by the Apostles, distinguished into two, though after the writing of their Epistles, will rationally presume that the distinction of names took its date from the distinction of the things, which *Salmasius* himself has owned against *Petavius*; and that the ceasing so to use the words promiscuously, can never take off from our Author the credit of an Apostolical writer, notwithstanding the pretended inconformity thereof to the writings of the Apostles themselves. But

secondly,

secondly, if we admit their opinion, who conceive the Orders to be distinct even then, when the names were common, yet supposing, that the Scriptures use them promiscuously, there is a visible reason, why *Ignatius* should distinguish: For though two different things may sometimes indifferently pass under the same names, when either they are used to express some notion or character, that holds in common to them both, or the subject matter determins the signification; yet when in the same proposition they are both to be represented in their proper and distinct Ideas, according to all the laws of speaking or writing, they will necessarily require distinct and proper appellations. For how improper had it been to have exprest the peculiarities of several dignities, in the same Stile and Character, and to make a difference without a distinction? How incongruous to common sense, to specify three distinct Ecclesiastical Orders, under the names of Presbyters, Presbyters and Deacons: and in inforcing the subjection of the one to the other, bid Presbyters be subject to Presbyters? So that upon the whole, the great quarrel of our adversaries against *Ignatius* is this, that his language is not like their opinion, irrational and absurd.

As to their second refuge, to wit, the authority of St. *Jerome*, I shall not interpose dogmatically in a Controversy, in which the most able School-men, and other learned Writers are so much divided. It is the confident asseveration of *Medina*, that St *Jerome*, and other of the Fathers, agreed in the

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Hereſie of *Aerius*, but that the Church prudently tolerated that in the one, which for different reaſons it condemned in the other. But upon this principle he will hardly be able to ſecure himſelf againſt the force of *Bellarmine's* reply, How the Church then continued the pillar and ground of truth, while She foſtred Hereticks in her Boſom? And how we can produce the Catholick Fathers as teſtifiers to the Chriſtian Doctrin, who in any one point of it ſymbolized with Hereticks, deſerted the ſenſe of the Church, and turned aſide to the Flocks of the Companions? And ſurely, though St. *Jerome* might differ from others as a private Divine in ſome Interpretations of Scripture, yet he ſo long kept himſelf ſound as a Catholick Chriſtian, while he did not obtrude any of them againſt the tradition of the Apoſtles, and the unity of the Church. And therefore, though I do not agree in his particular opinion, as holding Church Government ſetled by our Saviour himſelf, in a clear and manifeſt ſubordination; yet I do not deſire, among all the Fathers of the Church a more pregnant teſtimony, than St. *Jerome* will afford us for a like imparity of Church Officers by Apoſtolical inſtitution: For 'tis he, who in his Epiſtle to *Evagrius*, expreſly calls it an Apoſtolical tradition, and founded in the Old Teſtament, that whatſoever priviledge *Aaron* and his Sons, and the *Levites* enjoyed in the Temple, Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons might juſtly challenge in the Church. 'Tis he who informs us, on the 23 of St. *Matthew*, of the Apoſtles practice of ordaining Biſhops and Preſbyters

byters in the several Provinces, where they Preach'd the Gospel. 'Tis he who stiles the Governours of the respective Churches, the Contemporaries of the Apostles, by the name of Bishops, as *Mark* of *Alexandria*, *Linus*, *Cletus*, and *Clemens* of *Rome*, *James* of *Hierusalem*, *Ignatius* of *Antioch*, and *Policarp* of *Smyrna*. And though his opinion were, that Bishops were postnate to Presbyters, as instituted for the prevention of Schism, yet I appeal to himself for a witness, that the remedy bears date from the disease, even from that time when it was said at *Corinth*, (which was surely in the Apostles days,) *I am of* Paul, *I am of* Apollos, *I am of* Cephas, as appears in his Comment upon *Titus*. Surely therefore St. *Jerome* never dreamt that Episcopacy was Antichristian, nor ever designed to effect that from evidence of Scripture, which has been since attempted by the power of the Swotd. *Ignatius* his advice, for the subjection of Presbyters to their Bishop, suited well enough with his Principles, as indeed it did with those of all Christendom besides, till at last mens interest led them on as to urge Presbytery from St. *Jerome*, so to quote St. *Paul* for Rebellion.

3. But thirdly, from the consideration of this great variety of Opinions, to salve this confusion of names, it may perhaps be seasonable to enquire, whether there be really found in Scripture such a Communion of names, as is pretended. I am conscious, that herein I advance an Hypothesis against many great and justly venerable Names: And therefore, I shall only humbly propose a twofold distinction;

for the clearing those places of Scripture, which concern the point in question. The first is, between the Universal Church, and those particular Provinces, wherein Churches were planted under their respective Rulers. In the former respect I grant, that the word Presbyter is indifferently applyed to the Chief Governours of the Church, and that they are the same persons, who are in one place called πρεσβύτεροι, and in another, ἡγούμενοι ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς. Which word, whether it were Translated into the Church from the *Jewish* Synagogue, or else taken from Age, which brings experience, and consequently fits for Government, was in those days rather an appellative of dignity, than a distinctive character of an Office. And therefore generally in the *Acts of the Apostles*, while *Jerusalem* and *Christendom* were in a manner of the same extent, the word *Presbyter*, which in particular Churches was still a title of Honour, had bear a more ample, and undetermined signification.

But if any of our adversaries take advantage from this concession, I desire him only to consider, that the *Apostles* are oftner called by the name of *Deacons*, than the chief Governours of the Church, by the name of *Presbyters*. As *Deacons of God and of Christ*, 1 Thess. 3. 2. *Deacons of the New Testament*, 2 Cor. 3. 6. *Deacons of the Gospel*, Ephes. 3. 7. *Deacons of righteousness*, 2 Cor. 11. 15. *Deacons of the Church*, Col. 1. 25. I confess that our Translation in these, and other parallel places, always read *Ministers* in stead of *Deacons*, (as is observed in

thirty

thirty places in the vulgar *Latin* of St. *Jerome*, yet it is the very same word, which is rendred *Presbyters* in the Epistles of *Timothy* and *Titus*. Which containing Apostolical Directions for the management of Particular Churches, (*de statu Ecclesiastico compositæ*, as *Tertullian* speaks) distinguish Church Orders by their Names, and Titles, as well as their Offices, and Powers. And therefore, though in respect of the Universal Church, the principal Rulers are sometimes stiled πρεσβύτεροι, to signify their Superiority over the Brethren; sometimes διάκονοι, to denote their immediate Ministration, and attendance upon Christ, the great Bishop of our Souls, and Apostle of our profession: Yet nothing will follow from hence, but that in particular Churches, they might be both limited, and restrained, the one to the second Order of Priests, the other, to the Attendants upon the Bishops: So that this observation gives the same ground for *Deacons* to contest with *Presbyters*, as it does for *Presbyters* with *Bishops*. And thence, because the Apostles, and the Brethren, are indifferently called *Disciples*, they will, by this way of arguing, strengthen the pretence of the *Independents*, and (as 'tis worded by a learned Writer) *hold the stirrop to the Congregations, to throw themselves out of the Saddle.*

But secondly, If this Communion of names be pretended in particular Churches, (as at *Philippi*, *Ephesus*, and *Crete*,) I shall crave leave with *Epiphanius*, to make another distinction of particular Churches from one another. For he in his Refutation of

Aerius his Argument drawn from the Communion of names, objects to him his not understanding the Histories of the Primitive plantation of Churches, asserting, That at the first forming of them, (which could not be perfected in an instant) there were in some places, Bishops without Presbyters, and in other, Presbyters without Bishops; which could be no inconvenience for a small space of time, since those, who planted them, were sufficiently enabled to supply the defect of either. He never observed this confusion of names, which has been since pretended, (as neither did any, that went before him) but thought this one consideration to be valid enough, to convince his adversary both of errour in Interpreting Scripture, and of Ignorance in the Monuments of the Church.

But granting all that we have hitherto asserted, and moreover, that the objection from the plurallity of Bishops, mentioned at *Ephesus*, and *Philippi*, be fully taken off upon this presumption, that in the Apostles days, there were more Bishops than one in a City, 'till a more perfect Coalescence was at length made between the *Jewish*, and the *Gentile* Converts; yet notwithstanding, it may be still demanded, What is all this to the ease before us? For here in a particular Church (the Church of *Ephesus*) the same persons in the same Speech, are called both *Presbyters*, and *Bishops*. To which I answer, that if τῆς ἐκκλησίας denote the *universal Church*, my first distinction holds good: But if not, I have the Testimony of *Irenæus*, (an authority

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next to Apoſtolical,) to extend the word *Church*, beyond the City of *Epheſus*, and *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*, beyond one Order of the Clergy. For ſo he writes in his Third Book, and Fourteenth Chapter, *In Mileto enim Convocatis Epiſcopis, & presbyteris, qui erant ab Epheſo & a reliquis proximis Civitatibus.* To which the late Vindicator of Monſieur *Daillee*, ſeems to return an anſwer, by giving *Irenæus* the lye; *A Divi Lucæ narratione ſeorſim abit.* But ſurely, when St. *Paul* ſays, *verſ.* 25. *All you, among whom I have gone Preaching the Kingdom of God*, he ſeems to intimate a greater extent than the ſingle City of *Epheſus* will amount to, and conſequently, to give us ſome ground for a reconcilement between *Irenæus* and St. *Luke*: And therefore, I ſhall make no other uſe of our Authors reply, than to obſerve another inſtance of the hard fate of the Fathers of the Church, however ancient and Apoſtolical, when they croſs mens Intereſts and Opinions. For if we urge them with *Ignatius*, he is ſpurious, and ſuppoſitious, and therefore to be rejected; if with *Irenæus*, he is falſe and fabulous, and ſo not to be believed.

I have thus far explained the difficulty ariſing from the phraſe of the Text, and therein juſtified my diſſent from our *Engliſh* Tranſlation, in reading *Biſhops* inſtead of *Overſeers*.

And as the Reverend Fathers of our Church, at His Majeſties Reſtauration, thought fit to change the place, which this paſſage of Scripture formerly had in the Book of *Ordination*, ſo I have here given ſome reaſon, why that which was formerly a part

of

of the *Epistle* for the *Ordination* of *Priests*, may now be made the *Text* of a Sermon, at the *Consecration* of a *Bishop*.

In which are comprised all the principal arguments, which may enforce a Bishops vigilance and circumspection, in the management of his Pastoral Charge, and urge home the Caution of the Text, *Take heed therefore*. The Topicks to perswade a more than ordinary Care in any duty, are generally four: All which we meet with in this place.

1. The excellency of the thing Cared for, the Church of God, *which he hath purchased with his own blood*.
2. The Persons Concernment in it, arising from the peculiar trust reposed in him, *the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops*.
3. The danger of miscarriage, in the following words, *For after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you*.
4. The possibility of preserving the thing Cared for, which though not fully expresst, is sufficiently implyed in these Phrases, of *Taking heed to your selves of feeding the Church*.

Of these briefly, and in their order, as far as the greater business of the day will permit.

And first, of the excellency of the thing Cared for, *The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*.

Where we may observe a manifest point of *Christian* Doctrin, by immediate consequence deducible from the words (to wit) the Divinity of our Saviour:

Saviour? A truth, which offers it self to us, with such uncontrollable clearness, that the *Socinian* finding it staring him directly in the face, to elude the evidence, corrupts the Text, reads *Christi* in stead of *Dei*, (which yet in the *Syriack* Edition, whence he takes it, seems rather an Exposition than a Version) and thereby offers the same violence to the Temporal Word of God, as he had done before to the Eternal. And as some Barbarous Nations are said to have cut out the Tongues of their abused Captives, lest they should disgrace them, by publishing their wrongs and injuries, having first robb'd Christ of his Divinity, he finds himself obliged to rob the Church of the Scriptures, which bear witness to the truth of it.

But this is consistent enough with his Principles: For having so loosly setled the notion of a Church, as to make an universal Apostacy commence from the very death of the Apostles, he had no great reason to over-value the Blood of Christ, which had procured such a short lived, and uncertain benefit. He might justly presume the price was not very great, where the purchase was so little regarded. But let *Socinus* go on with as much scorn, as he pleases, to slight the one, and trample upon the other, a true Catholick Bishop, that knows it cost more to redeem a Soul, will hence take an argument to infer, that his watchfulness over his Flock, ought to rise in some proportion to that esteem and value, which his Lord and Master hath set upon it. He will not forfeit, or betray his trust, for the sake of silver and gold, and those other corruptible things, which

which he well knows, were utterly unable to redeem it: But considering it as purchased by the blood of Christ, he will judge it worthy to be preserved and cared for, though with the expence or hazard of his own: It was for the Churches sake, that the Son of God came down from Heaven, emptyed himself of his Glory, exhausted a richer than all the world could afford besides. For this end, was the great Bishop of our Souls τελειωθεὶς (according to the critical importance of the word, Consecrated to his Episcopal Office) by *strong crying and tears*, by death and blood. So costly and chargeable was his Consecration, that he seems to decline, and deprecate it, with a *Nolo Episcopari, Father if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me*; And we may justly think his Father would have saved him, if a meaner ransom could have saved the World.

This then (Holy Fathers) is that Sacred *depositum* which is committed to your Charge, so often repeated in the Office of the Church for this Solemnity, even the greatest gift that ever was poured forth upon the Sons of Men, the precious blood of the Son of God, the unsearchable riches of Christ. It lies upon you therefore to testify, that the blood of Christ was not spilt in vain, and to accomplish that redemption, which your Lord hath merited: That neither through your miscarriage, may Christ be defeated of his purchase, which are the Souls of men, nor the Church of her price, and priviledge, the merit of her Saviours Blood.

But I pass from the invaluable excellency of the thing

thing cared for, to the second motive of the Text; even your own concernment in it, arising from the consideration of the Person by whom you are intrusted, *The Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops.*

As the gift of the Holy Ghost was the signal prerogative, whereby the Church of Christ outvyed the lustre of the Temple, and which our Saviour at his departure, thought an abundant compensation to his Disciples for the defect of his Corporal presence with them; so amongst all the noble purposes, for which he was then poured forth upon all Flesh, there is no one thing represented in Scripture, which he seems to have a more visible, and immediate concern in, than the erecting and authorizing a Ministry, commissioning for Church Offices, and enabling for the discharge.

This is that great Work, which, however meanly esteemed, or scornfully treated in this World, was in the estimation of our Saviour, one of the choicest Largesses, which at his Triumphant ascending far above all Heavens, he thought fit to shed forth upon his Church. And thence we find, *Matthew* 28. 18. that when after his ascension, he tells his Disciples, *all power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth*, the first and great instance, wherein he imparts it to his Followers, is a Commission for the Ministry, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations*: And accordingly, that triumphant *Psalm*, which the sweet Singer of *Israel* prepared to be Sung at the removal of the Ark, whence God did use to deliver his Oracles from between the Cherubins, the adumbration of our

Saviours removal from Earth to Heaven, is by the Apoſtle repeated and accommodated thereto, *Epheſ.* 4. 8. and the completion verified in this, *that he gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtors and Teachers.*

Theſe were the Gifts he then received for men; as a ſtanding Teſtimony, that, though himſelf were departed, the Lord God dwelt ſtill among them. No wonder therefore to find in the Text, *the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops*; ſince their very employment, is one of his peculiar donatives, as that of *Timothy* is expreſly called his χάρισμα, in each of his Epiſtles.

It were an eaſie matter to extend this conſideration beyond the Church of *Epheſus*, and to trace the intereſt of the Holy Ghoſt, in conſtituting Church Governors from the firſt Foundation of Chriſtianity to this day, to find him not only once fitting *Bezaleel*, and *Aholiab* with Skill, and Wildom, for the Building a material Tabernacle; But in every Age, empowering and qualifying ſerviceable Perſons, for the Strength and Beauty of his Church. This was the Commiſſion, which the great Biſhop of our Souls produced for himſelf, at his entrance upon his Paſtoral Charge, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and hath anointed me to Preach the Goſpel*, *Luke* 4. 18. Nor was this meerly perſonal to our Saviour, as *Baronius* would have it, who confines that Text to the firſt year of our Saviours Preaching; but when he comes to Ordain a Succeſſion, we ſhall find this to be the Rite, and Solemnity of the Conſecration: *As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* Where, if the ſimilitude

will

will not infer the Gift of the Holy Ghost, the next words will express it, *And he breathed on them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost*, John 20. 22. And after that he bids them tarry at *Jerusalem* till they were *endued with power from above*, Luk. 24. 49. which is Interpreted *Acts* 1. *endued with the Holy Ghost*. The Holy Ghost must first say *separate*, before *Saul* and *Barnabas* undertake the Charge. *Acts* 13. 2. Nor could the laying on of hands have made *Timothy* a Bishop, unless Prophecy had gone before: And lest these should seem choice, and peculiar instances of an extraordinary deputation of some persons, to whom God was pleased to vouchsafe extraordinary Revelations of himself, (and we know those, who have hence inferred, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were Evangelists) not fixed and standing Officers of the Church, (as *Walo Messalinus*, and others.) We have the full attestation of *Clemens Romanus*, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*, of the Apostles practice of Ordaining Bishops, out of those whom they had Converted, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι, after they had first tryed, and approved them by the Revelation of the Holy Ghost; whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* also calls ὑπὸ τῆς προφητικῆς συμφωνίας, *Such as the Holy Spirit had designed, and signified to them*: Nay, so clear is this truth of the Spirits superintendency in these great Solemnities, through the ancient Monuments of the Church, that Cardinal *Baronius*, however a stiff Asserter of the *Popes* Incroachments, both upon the right of Bishops, and the Holy Ghosts prerogative in their delegation, yet is forced by

the evidence of truth, to confeſs, that as Chriſt breathed the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles, in like manner have they transferred the ſame upon all their Succeſſors to this day, In as much, as they muſt undoubtedly partake of the Spirit of Chriſt, who miniſter in Chriſts ſtead, in the Sacred Offices of his Church.

It is an opinion, faſtned upon *Durandus*, that when God made the World, he threw it out of his Hands, and left all things in it ever ſince to act of themſelves, from thoſe ſeveral principles of Life and Motion, which he diſtributed among them at the Creation. A like conceit have ſome endeavoured to introduce into the Church, that the word *Spirit*, in Holy Scripture, is to be confined to that plentiful effuſion of it upon the Apoſtles, on the day of *Penteceſt*, thoſe miraculous Gifts and Graces, which in the infancy of Chriſtianity, accompanied the Preaching of the Goſpel. Which Commiſſion being perſonal to the Apoſtles, by conſequence, expired with them; ſo that their Succeſſors in the work of the Miniſtry, for any concern the Holy Ghoſt has in them, are left to ſhift for themſelves, or at moſt, to ſubſiſt upon that ſtock of reputation, which was at firſt gained in the World, by the mighty Signs and Wonders of their inſpired, and gifted Predeceſſors. But as the Schools, from the common Principles of Reaſon, have ſolidly maintained againſt the former, that ſo precarious and dependent is the Creature, as ſuch, both in its being, and operation, that ſhould God ſubtract his influ-

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ence and concurſe, whereby every moment he makes it, and works with it all its operations, are immediately ſuſpended, the whole Creation falls aſunder, and molders into its primitive Confuſion; ſo a like aſſertion, if the Scripture were ſilent, would common ſenſe and experience ſuggeſt to us, for a Confutation of the latter. For ſo powerful are the batteries that are daily made by the Luſts of Men, and the Malice of the Devil, and ſo impotent and unarmed a thing is the Church of God, conſidered in it ſelf, to withſtand the aſſaults of either, that not only the gates of Hell, but the powers of the World, would long ago have finally prevailed againſt it, but that it was ever Founded upon the Rock of Ages, and Supported by the Hand of Heaven.

The daily Sacrifice had long ſince ceaſed, and the abomination of deſolation been ſtanding in the Holy Place. And Chriſts Myſtical Body had not ſo long ſurvived his Natural, did not the ſame Spirit, which was at firſt breathed into it, go on continually to actuate, and enliven it. Surely therefore, now, as well as then, *there is a heavenly Treaſure in earthen Veſſels*, and the continuance of *the Miniſtration is from God, and not from us.* He is God, and not Man, and therefore *the Sons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* Biſhops are the Stars in Chriſt's own right Hand, and from this ariſes the utter impoſſibility for the Tayl of the Dragon, to ſweep them away, for the force of Men to pluck them thence, or for the powers of Darkneſs to extinguiſh them. The Apoſtles then, did not carry their Commiſſions with them to the other

World,

World, which, they knew, were left them for a perpetuity of ſucceſſion in this, both for them, and their Heirs for ever. 'Twas he told his Diſciples, who was never yet taxed with being worſe than his word, *Behold I am with you to the end of the World.* He could not mean it, doubtleſs, of their perſons, who did not long ſurvive him, nor can the συντελεια τῦ αἰῶνος, notwithſtanding ſome bold Criticiſms upon the words, refer to any other period of time, than that, wherein the Fabrick of the World ſhall be diſſolved, when Time it ſelf ſhall be no more. He is ſtill therefore with their Succeſſors, as he was with them after his Aſcenſion, *Vicariâ ſpiritûs præſentiâ*, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks, though not in the various diſtributions, and admirable virtue of their χαρισματα, the extent of their Juriſdiction, and extraordinary meaſure of their revelations; yet in the effectual Adminiſtration of all thoſe Ordinances, which were to reſide for ever in his Church, in order to the ſalvation of the World. Such are *the Preaching of the Word, Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, Ordaining Miniſters, Ordering Church-diſcipline, inflicting Cenſures, and the power of the Keys:* All which, as long as they are neceſſary, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt, ſo long is the preſence of the Holy Ghoſt neceſſary, to authorize perſons to diſpence them. Well therefore may we preſume, that our *Veni Creator Spiritus*, is not ſaid in vain at this great Solemnity, nor can we poſſibly overlook that viſible inſtance of his peculiar Preſence, in the Conſecration of this day.

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For though we live in an Age, wherein not only the work of the Ministry is become the derision of Fools, but even wise Men pretend to discern the dreadful symptoms of a departing Candlestick, and a tottering Church; yet it hath pleased him, who perfecteth strength in weakness, and is nearest at hand in the greatest exigents, to raise up the Sons of Nobles, to become the Princes of his People, to stop the Mouths of the one, and to refute the Prognosticks of the other.

He places over us, in the same persons, both *a glory*, and *a defence*; by the one, to take off scandal, by the other, to strengthen the Church. Blessed therefore be the Name of our great God, in whose Hand are the Hearts of Kings that hath stirred up the heart of Ours, to make this closer connexion between the Civil and Ecclesiastical interests, and in the same choice, effectually to provide for the perpetuity of the Church, and for the establishment of his Throne.

We have thus seen, that God has not failed hitherto to make good his promise to his Church, that the *Comforter shall abide with it for ever*: But since these instances have not proved so successful, as to silence the Contradiction of foolish and unreasonable men, I shall briefly consider some of the most plausible pretences that are made use of, to shake the stability of the Church, and turn the Holy Ghost out of his Office.

First then, *the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops*, and therefore not the Civil Magistrate. It is an objection

objection of the *Romanists*, against the *English* Reformation, that the power of Order hath ceased in our Church, ever since the departure from the Church of *Rome*, as being now utterly dissolved into the Kings deputation of Commissioners for the Administration of Ecclesiastical Affairs. And though the scandal be abundantly refuted, by the sacred Rites, and Solemnities of this day, yet we have had those among our selves, who in stead of denying the charge, as they justly might, have pretended to justifie the Church, by owning the accusation. For we are told, by the Disputers of this World, that the Church is nothing else, but a *Christian* Common-wealth, and that all pretence of Divine authority and obligation upon Conscience, abstracted from the power of the Sword, is a meer Imposture, and destructive to the State. Thus, by the old Stratagem of the Enemy of Man-kind, is the Church, as was once its Author, traduced as an enemy to *Cæsar*: Though, I hope, the Case may be so plainly stated between both, as to vindicate the Rights of the one, without incurring the Jealousie of the other.

The contrary assertion, to what we have laid down, can be maintained only upon one of these three Grounds.

First, that there was no right for Christians to associate together for the Worship of God, according to the profession of Christianity, antecedent to the Command or Allowance of the Civil power.

Or Secondly, supposing a Society of *Christians*, that

that there was no right of Rule or Government, veſted in the Officers and Paſtors of it.

Or thirdly, ſuppoſing a Church power, that it eſcheated to the ſupream Magiſtrate, when the Church became incorporate into the Civil ſtate.

The firſt of theſe, though perhaps the ultimate reſolution of the other two, reſolves it ſelf into Blaſphemies beyond the confutation of the Pulpit. We muſt thence pronounce all the Conventions of Chriſtians, even thoſe aſſemblings of themſelves together, which the Apoſtle commands his *Hebrews*, not to forſake, to be ſo many unlawful Conventicles, and not exempt the firſt Council at *Jeruſalem*, from the accuſation which we are ſure was managed by the preſiding of the Holy Ghoſt. We muſt affix the blackeſt note of Infamy upon the Apoſtles and the Primitive *Chriſtians*, and aſcribe a right to the *Heathen* Magiſtrates, which ſhall juſtify the perſecution of *Chriſtianity*. We muſt arraign the Noble Army of Martyrs, whoſe Heroical Courage we hitherto ſolemnize, of foul ſelf-Murther, as well as folly, in being prodigal of their Blood, to no purpoſe, running upon the Sword without a warrant, and laying down their lives in the defence of a propoſition, when they had no obligation to profeſs it, and ſo execute their Names, and Memories, as the *Heathen* did their perſons, by owning, that they ſuffered deſervedly. But ſurely, if we have not forfeited our Faith, as well as our Charity, we may conclude they had hard meaſure enough at their Perſecutors tribunals, and therefore may be diſmiſt from ours.

The ſecond pretence is ſomewhat more plauſible, That there is ſuch a Society, as a Church, and Officers placed in it, but ſuch, whoſe only buſineſs it is to teach and to declare the will of God, without any rule or authority committed to them, over thoſe who ſhall receive it. Againſt which we might reaſon with the Learned *Grotius*, upon *Luke* 6. 22. that there is no neceſſity of aſſigning a poſitive and expreſs Precept in Holy Scripture, for granting the Society of the Church, eſtabliſhed by God; all thoſe things are virtually commanded in it, which are abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve it in its purity, and its being. Such is the power of Diſcipline and Government, as is evident, from the common notion of Societies in general, and the peculiar nature of this. But not contenting our ſelves to argue meerly from natural Reaſon, in a poſitive Inſtitution of this kind, as tranſcends the ſublimeſt diſquiſitions, and cloſeſt deductions of it, if we conſult the pattern in the Mount, or the ſettlement of the Church in the New Teſtament, which contains the Covenant of Grace, whereupon it is founded, we ſhall find in the Church, as in the Ark, which was the Type of it, *the rod of Aaron*, as well as *the Tables of the Law*, and diſcover in it the manifeſt traces of a paternal and imperative, though no coercive Juriſdiction. We ſhall there find the Enacting of Laws, as in the firſt Council at *Jeruſalem*, a promulgation of the Decrees that were made by the Apoſtles and Elders, which was done by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, through the Cities, *Acts* 16. 4. a Judiciary proceſs

ceſs against offenders, 1 *Tim.* 5. 19. a punishment of the guilty, as appears in the incestuous *Corinthian*, and in the same instance, the absolution of the Penitent, and relaxation of the Censure. We shall find there the persons with whom the management of these great affairs was intrusted, dignified and distinguished by the Titles of προϊσάμενοι, προεστῶτες, ἡγούμενοι, & ποιμένες, all which import Rule and Authority, whereto they were solemnly Sanctified and set apart, by a visible and Sacred Rite of Imposition of hands: All which, if they are duly, and impartially considered, will sufficiently evidence, that these things were something more than Pageantry and Show, that there was a Government in the World, subsisting upon a different claim, from that of the *Roman* Empire, that Christ sent forth his Apostles, not only as Sheep among Wolves, but as Pastors among Sheep; and that he had a Kingdom, though not of this World.

Thirdly therefore, that this Spiritual Authority was dissolved, and melted down into the Civil, when the World came into the Church, and the Empire became Christian, must be made out one of these three wayes, either from *the original right of the Empire, the revelation of God*, or *the reason of the thing*. The right of the Empire stands upon this *basis*, that the Power of the Church depended upon the confederation and consent of Christians, which the Supream Magistrate may at his pleasure draw back and resume into himself.

But first, against this pretended agreement of

the Primitive *Chriſtians*, we may argue, from all thoſe inſtances of the agency of the Holy Ghoſt, in conſtituting Church Officers, which we have mentioned already: All which bear evident Teſtimony to a poſitive Inſtitution, and a Divine Authority.

But ſecondly, ſuppoſing it for the preſent, I demand, Whether the Primitive *Chriſtians* had a right to enter into thoſe confederacies antecedent to the command or allowance of the Empire, or no? If not, we are brought back again to the Apoſtate Principles of the *Leviathan*. And though I ſhould grant Mr. *Selden*, that *Chriſtians*, after the death of our Lord, had the allowance of the State, by that Act of the Empire, which tolerated the *Jews*; Yet to ſay, that the Society was legally diſſolved, when they came more narrowly to be enquired into, is to take off the Glory of Martyrdom from thoſe, who notwithſtanding the Edicts of the Empire, kept on the Aſſemblies of the Church, and the brand of Apoſtacy from others, who pleaded for themſelves, that they had left them. If it be ſaid, that the Society of the Church, had this right of mutual Confederation, the caſe is juſt where it was. For whether the Governours of the Church ſubſiſt immediately by Divine Right, or no; yet if the Church, as a Society, for the better maintaining of Chriſtianity by Divine Right, be enabled to appoint them, obedience is juſtly due to them in the Affairs of Chriſtianity, independent upon the Powers of this World. And ſurely, water will riſe

no,

no higher than the place from whence it descended; nor can the Empire ever come to challenge the Rights of the Church, which were antecedent to any Act of it, unless it have pleased the Great Soveraign of both, to declare his Pleasure for transferring them. For if the Church be a Society, immediately constituted by God, then can it not be dissolved in time, but by the same Power, which established it at the beginning. But where is there to be found in Scripture, any shadow of an Ordinance for this Temporary condition of the Church? Surely all things there seem to run in another strain. If *Timothy* be instructed by St. *Paul*, how to behave himself in the Church of God, he is forthwith charged to keep the Commandment unblameable, untill the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the Angel of *Thyatira* be reprehended for the remiss exercise of his Authority, he has likewise a command from our Saviour, to hold it fast and maintain it 'till his coming. Christ did not appoint Pastors in his Church, only 'till the time of *Constantine*, but 'till we all come in the unity of Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man. Which woful experience will assure us was not effected in *Constantine's* dayes, nor will it ever be, 'till the consummation of all things: The darkness which over-spreads our understandings, can never be dispelled, but by the Light of Glory; nor can our hearts be entirely reunited, but by that Charity, which never fails.

There remains therefore only the last way of arguing,

arguing, and that is from the reason of the thing. For thus it is pleaded, that unless both Powers reside intirely in the same Persons, they must both expect the same Fate which attends a Kingdom divided against it self, by reason of daily and vexatious contentions between the Church and Common-wealth, the Sword of Justice and the Shield of Faith, and which is more than this, in the breast of every Christian, between the *Christian* and the *Man*.

Thus what we deny to Nature, shall be effected by Grace, the Gospel of Peace shall retrieve a State of War, and this pretended Order and Government, become but another name for Confusion.

And though I have before barred this Method of Reasoning, by supposing Christianity to be a positive Constitution of Divine Grace, (albeit Religion in general, be a moral Virtue,) yet because the Charge is of so high a Nature, as if the Churches claim of Power from God, rendred it uncapable of the Protection of his Vice-gerent, and Christs coming to fit Inhabitants for another World, were a means to dis-people this; I am obliged, for the removal of suspition, to propose these following considerations.

First therefore, though other Religions may be justly presumed prejudicial to the publick Peace, in as much as the Devil, who is the Inventor of them, is withal the Author of Confusion in the Government of the World; yet such is the peculiar *genius* of Christianity, that where-ever it is, either Preached or Received, it can create no Jealousie in

in the State. The ground upon which this Assertion stands, is this, that it disclaims all title to the Sword, but leaves him that takes it, to perish with it, though it be drawn in the defence of Christ himself.

Surely he that had *legions of Angels* at his command, in stead of sending forth Apostles to Convert men to the Faith, might have Commissioned Generals, to destroy the Unbelievers. But this, in the esteem of Infinite Wisdom, was judged more Military than Religious, and the way of Propagating his Gospel had been inconsistent with the design of it.

This therefore being supposed, that Christianity leaves the power of the Sword in those hands, in which it finds it, how can it possibly make any alteration, as to any Temporal Condition, which is professedly maintained by it? And therefore, that great bugbear of *Imperium in Imperio* need not be so terrible as men would make it, as long as their Objects, Ends, and Offices, stand as really distinguished as their Obligations. And these were the Thoughts that Christians had of their Religion, as long as Christianity was understood. In the Church then, as of old in *Israel*, there was no Smith to provide Swords and Spears, though against their persecuting *Philistins*.

And though this intire renunciation of all claim to any thing wherein the Civil Power was concerned, proved unable to protect them, either from Slander or Persecution, yet that which exeited the

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rage and fury of their Enemies, was rather an averſeneſs to the Chriſtians Doctrine, than any jealous concern for their own ſafety. It being abundantly evinced by the ancient Apologies of the Church Writers againſt the *Gentiles*, that though they did not believe the *Chriſtian Faith*, they could not in Civil juſtice perſecute a *Chriſtian*. No, their Lives *then* were a Tranſcript of their Doctrin, and their Obedience was look'd upon as a tryal of their *Faith*. To obey Authority, was taught and practiſed under a *Nero*, and their Submiſſions were as unparalelled as their Provocations. And we may truly ſuppoſe under the *Roman* Emperours, that had the Doctrine of Obedience been as throughly received by their *Heathen* Subjects, as it was Preached by St. *Paul*, and practiſed by his believing *Romans*, they had effectually provided for the publick tranquility without any farther need of Forts and Armies to ſecure it.

But ſecondly, the ſuppoſal of Divine Right in the Governours of the Church, where Chriſtianity is received into the State, abates nothing of the natural Right of the Civil Power, in matters of Religion. This aſſertion depends upon the foregoing: For if Chriſtianity makes no change at all in any Temporal concern of the World, then a *Chriſtian* State has the ſame right of ordering the Affairs of Chriſtianity, ſo that nothing be done by virtue of it, which may create a prejudice to the State, as any other Kingdoms of the World have in that Religion which they profeſs. For no Nation ever yet

yet openly pretended that great boldneſs with their Gods, as to make Religion, at pleaſure, become either true or falſe; but they therefore profeſs any Religion, becauſe they firſt ſuppoſe it to be true. Religion therefore being firſt eſtabliſh'd, whatſoever it be, all that afterwards follows, is a nomination of perſons to diſpence it, giving Laws for the due Adminiſtration of it, ſetting bounds and limits to the exerciſe, calling Aſſemblies to conſult about it, ratifying their Decrees with civil Sanctions, and receiving Appeals, in caſe of a corrupt Management, and an unjuſt Sentence. All which, Chriſtianity ſo entirely devolves upon the Magiſtrate, that thoſe who have taken the greateſt pains to clear the fundamental Right of the Church, have withal proved the moſt able, and vigorous Aſſertors of thoſe inherent Prerogatives of the Crown: And, whenever they come to be diſowned through the *Chriſtian* World, then, and not before, let the Church lye for ever under that guilt and *odium*, which men now make it their buſineſs to caſt upon it. Let Kings ceaſe to be *her nurſing Fathers*, and Queens *her nurſing Mothers*: In the mean time it bears the ſame notion with Religion in general, in reference to the powers of the World, ſave only in this, that it addreſſes it ſelf to them with greater obligations to take it into their protection, that is, with greater evidence of a Divine Authority.

Thirdly, however it has come to paſs, through the Debaucheries of Men, and the Malice of the Devil, that Religion (as a Learned man obſerves)

has been a politick Engin in ſome mens hands, and made uſe of for the battery, as by others, for the defence of the State; yet the Government of the Church of *England*, which is the ſubject of our preſent debate, ſtands as clear, and juſtifiable to the World altogether as our common Chriſtianity.

For as for the Eſſentials of it, if once Religion be diſmiſt from the Accuſation of turning the World upſide down, I would fain know, what further latent miſchief can be in this, that one man in a certain Precinct, or Dioceſs, take care, that all, who profeſs Religion, live in obedience and conformity to the Rules of it. And this is all which we claim, as eſſentially pertaining to Epiſcopal Juriſdiction. As for the Secular advantages of Temporal Priviledges, and Power, ſince we thankfully own them to be the meer acceſſions of Humane bounty, they can cauſe no jealouſie in the Author of them, 'till we ſee the Streams contend with the Fountain, and the Beams of the Sun, with the Sun it ſelf. Our Church never owned their Religion, who compare the Church to the Sun, and the Empire to the Moon, but Receives all theſe Temporall favours, as the Arbitrary donatives of the Civil Power, not in any wiſe her own, but entirely a borrowed luſtre. And, which is for the Eternal reputation of our Church, ſhe has learn'd to want them, as well as to abound with them; and can be equally loyal both in the loſs, and the enjoyment. Which we need go no further for a proof of, then her Canons, and her Practice: Both which, have

given

given us an evident demonstration, that she was the surest support, during the standing of the *English* Monarchy, and next to the Royal Family, the greatest sufferer in the fall.

But fourthly, if we take this Principle, that has raised such great clamours against the Divine right of the Church, and view it in those conclusions, which unavoidably flow from it, we shall find it the most contumelious and destructive to Government, of any thing that has appeared against it. And though I do not charge the conclusions upon all, who have owned the Principle, yet we may be allowed to take them from one, who well enough understands, and is not ashamed to speak out the just consequence of his premises.

Does not he then, who denies the Obligation of Christianity, upon this ground, that there is no Law antecedent to the Civil Sanction, at the same time take the Law of Nature out of Mens hearts, and a God out of the World, who is the Author, and Avenger of it? And does he not thereby put a People that should profess it, out of the protection of the Law of Nations? For what Faith can be expected from him, who does not yet own it to be his Duty? And how can he acknowledge it to be his Duty, who denies a God to revenge and punish the violation of it? Does not he, who makes the arbitrary pleasure of the Magistrate the sole Rule and Standard of Good and Evil, take away from the Prince, the deserved commendations of Justice, and Wisdom, and all those other Virtues, which are the most sparkling Diamonds in his Crown,

making no difference at all between *Tiberius* and *Antoninus*, *Nero* and *Titus*, the peſt, and the darling of Mankind: Is the Pope any thing beholding to him for this pretended extent of the bounds of the Civil Power, who at the ſame time places that power in poſſeſſion, and ſtrength, and the ſame right in an uſurping Tyrant, and the undoubted Soveraign? Does not he, who holds it his duty, to forſwear Chriſtianity at the command of the Magiſtrate, declare himſelf perfidious to the Government, as well as an Apoſtate from the Faith? For what truſt can be repoſed in him, in Civil Matters, who can renounce that ſolemn Covenant into which he was Baptized, and openly profeſſes, his Oath is not to be believed, when his Religion is called in queſtion? Or what tye can the Magiſtrate have upon him, who can make ſo bold with his God?

So fatal and pernicious is this exorbitant right of the *Leviathan*'s Common-wealth: It is a two edged Sword, which he puts into the Magiſtrates hands, the one meerly pretending to protect the People, the other really deſigned to deſtroy the Prince. Such are the abſurd Paradoxes, which the denyal of Church-power reſolves it ſelf into. All which, with a great many others, are ſo groſs and prodigious, that if ever the Church hath ſhow'd her ſelf undutiful to the State, it is in ſuffering ſuch a peſtilent Enemy to Government to enjoy the benefit of her Communion.

There is a ſecond pretence, againſt the intereſt

of the Holy Ghost, in a Bishops Consecration. That Christ gave the fulness of his Spirit only to St. *Peter* and his Successors, but nothing to the other Apostles, who seem to be joyned in Commission with him. So that whatever power and authority is enjoyed by Bishops, who succeed them, they hold it not immediately from Christ, but only as Suffragans of his pretended Vicar. But, since this is a point, in which the *Roman* Schools are divided among themselves, as appears, by the contrary assertions of *Soto*, *Victoria*, *Alphonsus à Castro*, and others; and the Dispute seems at last to be resolved, rather into the exercise of the Power; or, as the Schools love to speak, the application of the matter of it, than the power it self; it is properly the subject of another consideration, and does not so directly contradict, what we have hitherto concluded from the Text. And therefore, I shall proceed to raise an inference, or two, from the Holy Ghosts Concerment in the collation of Episcopal Power, which will likewise take in the remaining part of my Division.

First then, if *the Holy Ghost has made you Bishops*, you may hence infer the weight and burden of your Calling. It is sure no ordinary employment, where the Commission for it comes under the Broad Seal of Heaven. 'Twas God that gave the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, and therefore *Moses* who was to deliver it to the People, *exceedingly quakes and trembles*. And, if St. *Paul* be rapt up into the third Heaven, to receive Instructions for the Gospel,

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we presently hear of his Reproaches, and Distresses, and the great trouble coming upon him, from *the care of all the Churches*. No wonder therefore, if, when he had acquainted the persons here in the Text, with the derivation of their Authority, he forthwith presents them with a prospect of their danger. His own encounter at *Ephesus*, could not procure that rest, and quiet for the Bishops, he left behind him, but that after his departure, there were beasts to be fought with still. *For this I know, that grievous Wolves shall enter in among you.*

I shall not here take upon me the work of an Historian, nor give an account, how in all Ages of the Church, the lusts of the Flesh, and the Devils of Hell, have, with their utmost Malice, set themselves against it. If we do but open our Eyes, and behold the present face of Religion among our selves, we shall find arguments enough to call forth your utmost circumspection. *A great door is open to you, and many adversaries.*

For if that turbulent Spirit of Rebellion and Disobedience, which, not long since possest, rent, and tore this Nation, and was, by a Miracle of his Providence, a while since cast out, walks about night and day, seeking to return to the place from whence he came, with seven other Spirits, more wicked than himself, so to make our last estate prove worse than the former: If there are so many *Tobiahs*, and *Sanballats*, that envy the remainders of the prosperity of *Sion*, so many *Zebahs*, and

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Zalmunahs, that ſay to one another; *Let us take unto our ſelves the houſes of God in poſſeſſion*, that ſeek to alienate, or diminiſh the Churches Rights, robbing God *in Tithes and Offerings*, and then ſay, Wherein have we robb'd him? If the fiery *Jeſuit* on the one hand, and the reſtleſs *Fanatick* on the other, bend all their wit and power, firſt *to ſmite the Shepherd*, and then to ſcatter and glean up the Sheep; compaſſing Sea and Land to make Proſelytes, and when they have gained them, making them ten times more the Children of Hell, than themſelves: If what St. *Paul* Prophecied at *Epheſus* be now fulfilled with us, that *of our ſelves men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away Diſciples after them*, and ſtretching the Articles of the Church of *England* to ſo much a greater latitude, than the *Catholick* Church allows, that for as much, as in them lies *Pelagius* and *Socinus*, ſhall find here both ſhelter, and encouragement. Laſtly, if there be ſo many Hereticks in the World, that corrupt the Church of Chriſt, Schiſmaticks that divide it, and Atheiſts, that contemn it; It is then ſurely high time for you to look about you, to *contend earneſtly for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*; to joyn your Heads, your Hearts, and your Hands together, to ſupport the tottering Ark, which is now no longer Criminal, and keep it from ever returning into the Tents of the *Philiſtins*, which we have ſeen ſo miraculouſly redeemed from them.

But ſecondly, notwithſtanding all theſe diſad-

vantages,

vantages, if the Holy Ghoſt have called you to your Office, you may reſt aſſured, that he will own, and protect you in the diſcharge. If you held your Callings from the World, the frowns of the World might diſcourage you: But ſince 'tis God that ſets his Seal to your Commiſſion, you ſerve a Maſter, who, let the World be never ſo impatient, will aſſuredly make good your Patent, aſſert and juſtifie your Authority. When God ſays concerning *Cyrus*, *I have called him*, Iſa. 48. 15. it follows in the Text, *and I will make his way proſperous*. If God ſay to *Jacob*, *I have called thee*, no wonder to hear the encouragement he forthwith gives him; *When thou goeſt through the water, I am with thee; and through the Rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee.*

It ſeems to be an opinion among the Ancient Fathers, that every Biſhop hath two Guardian Angels. For beſides that, which is common to him with every man, he has another, as he is a Biſhop, appointed him at his Conſecration.

But the ſtability of your Function (Holy Fathers) has a ſurer ground than in theſe fancies of men. Even the God of Angels vouchſafes to become your peculiar Guardian. And if the Church, like *Jacob*'s Ladder, though the foot of it be on Earth, has its head in Heaven, there are not only Angels aſcending and deſcending, but God himſelf leans upon the top of it, and keeps it firm.

A conſideration this of great weight and moment, eſpecially under the apprehenſions of publick danger: It being uſual with men, in ſuch exi-

gents

gents as thoſe, to betake themſelves to their own Counſels and Contrivances; and when theſe fail, to deſpond, and give over; nay, ſometimes with a more prepoſterous piece of Policy, to make Shipwrack of a good Conſcience, in hopes to eſcape the ſtorm. But ſurely, if we own ſuch a thing as Divine Protection, which is never forfeited, but by diſtruſt, we ſhall ever find it, try it when we will, that the beſt way to ſecure our ſelves from danger, is to be doing our duty. For this infallibly engages God of our ſide, who *will be with us, as long as we are with him.* It is ſafer for the Mariner in a Tempeſt to ride out the Storm, then to ſtrike to Shore. And we need not fear Drowning, as long as Chriſt is in the Ship.

And therefore, let the *Heathen* rage, and the Nations take Counſel together; *he that ſitteth in the Heavens, ſhall laugh them to ſcorn, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion*; he can ſhatter their Councils, blaſt their Deſigns, defeat their Purpoſes, and ruin their Confederacies: And will never fail, openly to demonſtrate, that his Church is founded upon a Rock, too firm to be ſhaken by the combinations of men, even upon the promiſe of God, and the Graces of his Spirit, things eternally invincible by the gates of Hell.

Nor has God *ever left himſelf without witneſs* of this peculiar preſence in the greateſt diſtreſſes of his Church. Even at the firſt founding of it, when in all humane probability, it was ſo little enabled to ſtand out againſt the machinations of the

World, yet, then did the Almighty *reveal his arm*, and exert his Power, and in ſpite of all the oppoſitions both of Earth and Hell, made his own Counſel to ſtand, and flouriſh. 'Twas he of old, that upheld an *Athanaſius contra mundum*, and effectually reſcued his Church from that deluge of *Arrianiſm*, which to all appearance, had ſwallowed it up, and overwhelmed it.

Laſtly, to name no more, but this Church of ours, under thoſe ſignal inſtances of his afflicting providence, the ſinking our gates, deſtroying our palaces, and ſlighting the ſtrong holds of *Sion*, when that dreadful ſtorm had utterly ſunk both the Government of our Church, and our hopes of its recovery; yet even then did the Spirit of God *move upon the face of the waters*, 'till at length *the dry land appeared*, and again reduced it to that beautiful order, which has made it ever ſince the object of Malice, and the mark of Envy.

Surely therefore, he who had a favour for *Sion*, when her Stones were in the duſt, has not left off his concern for it, now it ſtands upon its pillars. But rather on the contrary, if the preſent methods of his Providence can give us any rule for a conjecture, he ſeems to have ſome further work in hand, for the eſtabliſhment of his Church, while he ſingles out perſons of ſuch worth and eminence, for the undertaking.

But thirdly, if *the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops*, you are entruſted by one, who will aſſuredly take an account of the Adminiſtration. It appears in the

the Records of the ancient Church, that they never brought a Bishop to publick penance. Of which practise, this seems to be one reason among others, that, since there was no spiritual power on Earth above him, they reserved him to the future Judgement, the tribunal of a Lord, who alone was higher than he. And therefore, though a Religious *Constantine* thinks fit to cover the faults of his Bishops with his own Purple, and the whole *Christian* World at this day were as forward to hide, as they are on the contrary, to reveal their Fathers nakedness; Yet all these coverings signifie nothing to him, who looks through them all, to him who *pondereth the heart*, and *weigheth the spirits of men*. All things are naked and open before him, with whom you have to do, and will one day appear so before the World, Angels, and Men. *Take heed therefore unto your selves and to the flock*, as those that *must give an account*. And do thou (O Lord) give that success to their Labours, that they may give it *with joy and not with grief*. Let thy *Urim* and *Thummim* be still with *thy holy ones*, that their Doctrine may be no other, than that whereto thy Holy Spirit hath set his Seal, and their Lives and Examples may be as Sacred, as their Callings. Put Courage into their Hearts, and a Terrour upon their Faces, *that with all boldness they may speak thy word*, and maintain a constant resolution to withstand the Corruptions of the Times, that so in the last day, when the great Shepherd of the Sheep shall appear,

to make his final Visitation, they may receive the Blessing, which belongs to those, *whom the Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a little, enter now into the joy of thy Lord.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be ascribed, as is most due, by us, and by all the World, all Power, Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now, and for evermore, Amen.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

P. 13. l. 10. *suppositious r. suppositions.*